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SUBJECT: EMIRATES SHIPPING LINES INFORMATION

REF: A. STATE 872252, B. HONG KONG 02428

1.(U) SUMMARY: Poleconoff met with Emirates Shipping Line (ESL) executive in Dubai on June 27, as requested in refel A. ESL's attorney's will submit a formal response to the US Federal Maritime Commission. ESL executive was willing to describe ownership and functions of ESL companies and gave assurances that there was no government ownership, management, or control over any entity. ESL will open an office in Dubai in the near future. It leases two vessels that are registered in Liberia and fly the Liberian flag. End Summary.

2.(U) Poleconoff met with Emirates Shipping Line (ESL) Senior Vice President, Middle East, Africa and Mediterranean, Mohamed El Alfay regarding information requested in ref A. The questions in refel A had previously been transmitted by Poleconoff to El Alfay by e-mail, while El Alfay was traveling in Kuwait and Iran. El Alfay said that ESL's attorneys would submit a formal response to the Federal Maritime Commission in the United States. ESL executives discussed the same information with Consulate Hong Kong (ref B).

Ownership

3.(SBU) El Alfay described the ownership structure of ESL. Emirates Shipping Lines, Free Zone Company (FZCO) is wholly owned by Emirates Shipping Holding (ESH), FZCO. ESH is owned 51 percent by retired Major General Abdulaziz al-Bannai, who is a UAE national. 49 percent is owned by Mr. Vikas Khan, (nationality unknown). Emirates Shipping Lines, LLC, Free Zone Entity (FZE), which is the shipping agent for ESL in Dubai is owned 51 percent by al-Bannai, 48 percent by Khan, and 1 percent by El Alfay, an Egyptian national. El Alfay explained that under UAE law, he had to be a co-owner in order to register the shipping agent in Dubai. All three entities are registered in Dubai Maritime City, which is under the Jebel Ali Free Zone Authority.

4.(U) El Alfay assured Poleconoff that neither the government of Dubai nor the UAE had a management role, or ownership, or exerted any control over ESL. He commented that the name Emirates was chosen because it was readily recognized around the world. Major General al-Bannai, a recent retiree from the Dubai Police, claims to have no official position in the government of Dubai or the UAE.

ESL's Address in Dubai

5.(U) ESL will open an office in Dubai in early July 2006. The office will be in Suite 1004 Al Moosa Tower, Shaikh Zayed Road, Dubai. ESL's postal address is P.O. Box 122115, Dubai, UAE.

Vessels Under Charter

6.(U) ESL charters two 3000 TEU container ships, the Emirates Liberty and the Emirates Freedom, and plans to charter two more vessels. Both vessels are registered in Monrovia, Liberia and fly the Liberian flag.

Liner Services

7.(U) ESL plans liner service to the United States from India and China. The Indus Express service will provide service between the ports of Mundra, Tuticorn, and Nhava Sheva in India, Colombo, Sri Lanka, Barcelona, Spain, and the ports of New York, Norfolk, and Charleston, SC. The Emirates Liberty and Emirates Freedom will sail on the Indus Express service.

8.(U) ESL's other planned liner service, the Asia Gulf Express, will provide service between the ports of Shanghai and Ningbo in China, Pusan in South Korea, and Colon, Panama, Kingston, Jamaica, and the US ports of Houston, Mobile, and Tampa on the Gulf of Mexico. ESL plans to charter two container ships for this service.

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